

No 8

An

Inaugural Essay

on

Scurrilous, Scurr. Alms & Whites

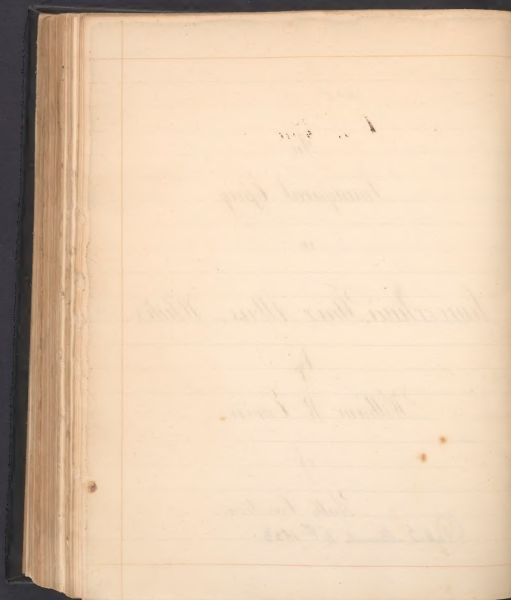
by

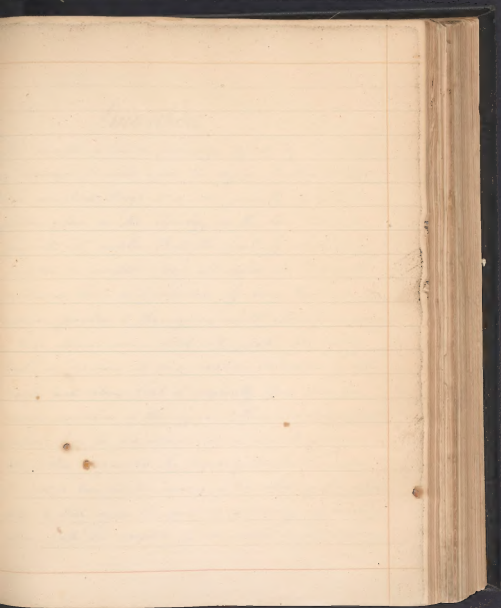
William R. Erwin

of

South Carolina,

Paper March 4th 1823

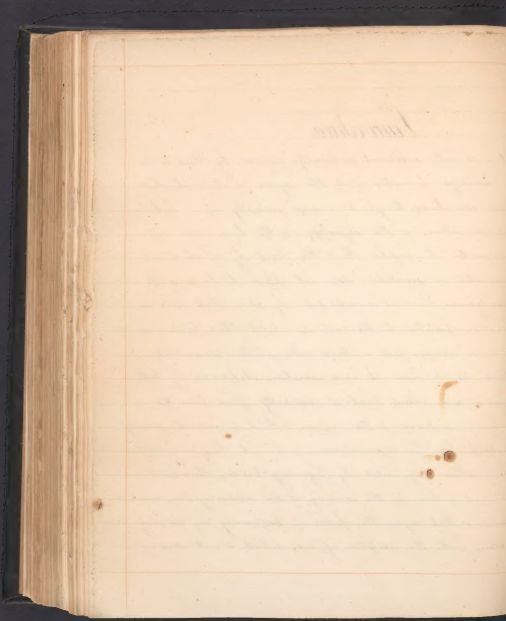




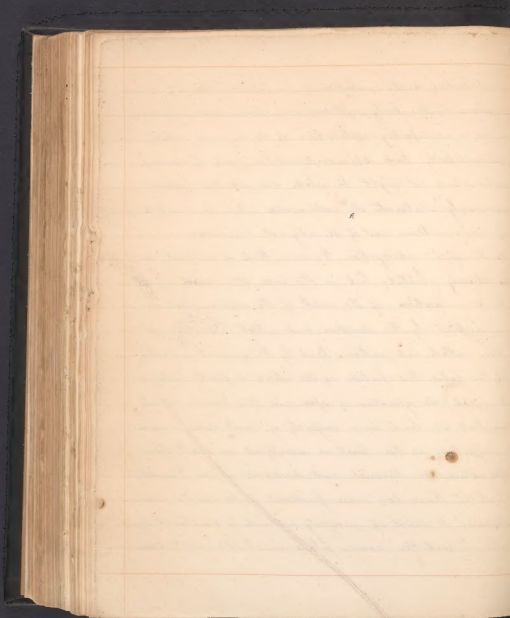


Leucorrhoea.

This is with sufficient propriety, defined by Parr to be a discharge of matter from the vagina of different colours and consistencies, though it is more generally of a pale or whitish colour, as the etymology of the term used to designate it implies. But the part by which it is generated or secreted, does not appear to be so well ascertained. Thus, it is contended by some, that it is a secretion peculiar to the vagina, whilst others pronounce it to be uterine and a third with greater plausibility teach us to view it as a secretion elaborated by both vagina and uterus. That it frequently issues from the mucous membrane of the vagina, I think, is rendered sufficiently probable, from the circumstances of its not being diminished, but rather augmented by pregnancy. Besides, there seems to exist a law in the economy of the uterine system, which denies to that organ the power of performing any secretory action, with the exception of men, which is not necessary.



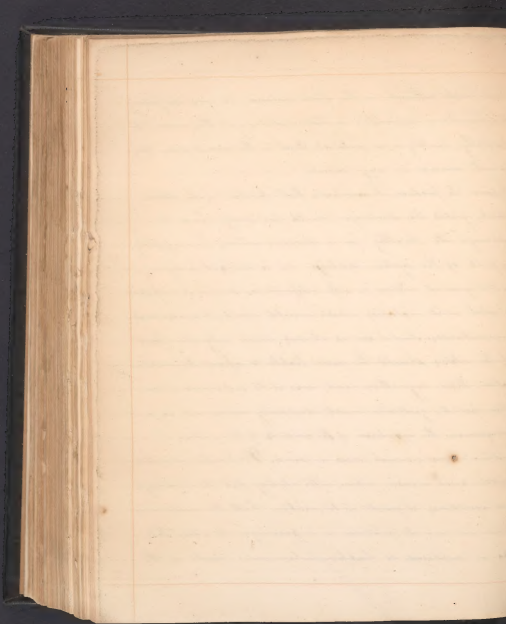
or tributary to the evolution of the fetus, whilst it is employed in this truly mysterious and obscure work of nature, to give a satisfactory explanation of the origin of which, has completely made defiance to all the efforts of medical genius. But it might be asked, does not the uterus occasionally elaborate the catamenia when in a state of impregnation; and if so, why not haemorrhage? To the first interrogation, I answer, that it certainly does, as already hinted, but in this case it is excited by all to be a portion of the neck of the uterus which is unoccupied by the decidua, and which has not yet been called into action. But by the gradual evolution of the fetus, this portion of the uterus is finally called on to yield its quantum of space, and thus becomes entirely occupied, at least in a majority of such cases, and in proportion as this part is developed, we shall find the catamenia diminish and disappear. Now, I contend that if haemorrhage were produced under similar circumstances, it must of necessity submit to similar changes and present the same phenomena. But this is not the case.



And beside although in the first instance, it was performing two functions dissimilar in their natures yet they were both perfectly healthy and natural. But in the second case, they do not accord in any respect.

Spurs to produce leucorrhoea, that portion of the uterus which yields the discharge would previously have to exchange its healthy for a diseased action, and consequently no part of the system displays in so eminent a degree as the gravid uterus, a self independence, a power competent to repel most maladies which would assail it under such circumstances. And I see no obvious reason why this part of the uterus should be more liable to assume this morbid action than any other, and was it to supervene at an other point, gestation must necessarily cease and as a consequence, the expulsion of the contents of the uterus.

But we have no such cases on record. Dr Smellie, it is true, supposes such a case, when after stating that the discharge was sometimes so great as to weaken both the mother and child and even to produce a miscarriage he adds, "this also is supposed to happen when some part of the



chromium being separated from the chrom. the mist that
was created by the mixture settles for the settlement
of the value, from its way through the microscope
but this is mere supposition without the weight of experiment
or facts to support it.

Having said thus much on the subject of the discharge,
it seems well to consider the probability of its springing from
the various circumstances which amongst others of less
prominence would lead me to such a conclusion,
is the suspension of Sauer's allus at the period of
construction, which so far as I have known uniformly
happens. If then one discharge issues from the
various circumstances of the engine and the other
from that of the valves, and they be distinct
events, as is contended by respectable authority,
I can conceive of no explanation which can be
adduced, that will satisfactorily account for the
above phenomenon. So a possibility which would
probably exist to consider competent to the task.
But absolute identity of origin, and a more ^{easy} and



altered explanation presents itself. Notwithstanding the healthy action of the uterus may be partially injured by persisting leucorrhoea, still it retains a sufficient degree of tone when aided by the stimulus which it receives from the general system under such circumstances, as to support for a time the morbid action and establish its own, the result of which is a flow of the menses.

But as soon as this constitutional stimulus is withdrawn, the diseased action which was held in suspension, resumes its progress, and continues to weaken the uterine as well as the general system, until the former is no longer capable of being awakened by the impression of the latter, in the latter of exerting its usual energy; in consequence of which the menses cease to flow. Hence, we find a considerable portion of those, who are attacked with leucorrhoea continue to menstruate pretty regularly in the early stage of the disease, but as it advances and the uterus becomes more involved, the catamenia is more irregular with regard to time and quantity until



it finally ceases, & the disease is not arrested. Numerous
proofs in the various countries, may be adduced to some
extent by weakening the strength, another of the conditions,
and through the medium of it the others. This may serve to
explain the circumstance above alluded to.

Not content with what I have already advanced, I wish to
press, further, this contested point, and consider it a matter
of but little practical importance, whether one or both
constitute the punctum saliens a kind of origin, as they
give to similar treatment and alike invade the functions
of the constitution, is not timely arrested by the power
of natural cure.

There may be other symptomatic idiopathic. The only
intention to consider only the idiopathic. It sometimes occurs which
are alleged to produce the form of the disease, more particularly
by, as the application of cold, general or local, a generous
but too copious excitation of the masses, a long an inactive
and sedentary life, except in very, exertions of the mind, and
all causes which weaken the constitution generally, or locally
affect the parts by which it is excited.



The immediate cause, as assigned by Parr, is a debility of the
muscle from which the menses flow, or a stultid involution
from them. These suggestions I hold to be suppositious and
extra, viz. at least they must prove or rather apply to
the vagina, as one of the causes of the disease.
It has been satisfactorily proved by regular demonstration
that the uterus which yields the menses, consequently is
essentially adapted to the secretion of the fluid in question,
in the vagina, and as both her positions rest on a
development of them, as the fluid circulating through
them they must be ever active, as they cannot act as
witness^{ment} when they do not exist. Hence I conclude that
its secreted matter is not other than what it is when the
uterus is in its natural position, viz. white, watery, soluble
in sugar and lactic acid, thick, white, above or
below the membrane of the uterus, and under
such circumstances generally, always itself by
its appearance, and its reaction, and is no instance to it
when the has ever expelled such an offending cause
by a secretion of leucorrhoea.



"The action is not many & slow, which, has
situated us remote, not as existing causes. To illustrate
the truth of this opinion, by examples, I to leave to
refer to the cases of the disease reported by Dr Robertson
In no instance did the agitation of the mind fail to
aggravate the existing disorder if it had been previously
stopped, to reproduce it.

Having considered the causes of *typhus albus*, I proceed to
make a few observations with regard to its effects.
These are much influenced by the constitution of the
patient and the profuseness and continuance of
the flow. Where the constitution is seriously good, the
discharge moderate and of short continuance, its effects
are transient, & with it settles. It is to rise the order
and we have as its consequence a state of health much to
be desired. The whole spirit sustained by the eye of
health, shared surrounding society; now no longer dejected in
sinner of obscurity. Depression, dependency and melancholy
is up the power of quiet, and who select solitude as
more congenial to her feelings.



The trunk or back is surrounded by the hæmorrhoids
absent and condition. The face becomes livid, the integ-
uments about the eyes are suffused, the inferior ^{part} of the abdom-
en is swollen, the lower extremities are edematous and
swollen, insensibility of the fingers, the stomach is distended,
palpitations of the heart, swelling of the throat in a compari-
son to squamous super-ven in the use of mercury,
sustaining in numerous a night, with many other conse-
quently alarming appearances, which are apt to terminate in
dropsy or consumption.

This disease may be distinguished by a discharge of urine
from the excretory, accompanied by pain and weakness
in the back and loins, with a sense of stinging, heat
and burning, which is related to the region of the
uterus and vagina. But these signs will not always
enable us with sufficient propriety to discriminate
the disease from one to which it bears a considerable
similitude, and with which it is very liable to be
confounded. I allude to gonorrhoea. The discharge, however,
in the latter disease is generally more regular and





in entering on the treatment of the disease, it is more than
assured at that point of our subject.

From the different points of view which it presents
when its attack, we are not now in a position to enter, at least,
and from its great difficulty, and sometimes almost
intractability in controlling it, together with the different
views of practical men, we should not without excuse to
give a variety of medicines employed in its treatment.
Accordingly if we take a retrospective view of the
literature written on this subject we shall find that
there is scarcely an article of any note that contributes
to swell the catalogue of the *Native Doctor*, which
is not thus used & recommended.

but I shall content myself with submitting the name of
treatment which at present is generally adopted.

1. medicine may even in the very latest state of its
evolution, admit of some inevitable selection of
medicines. there are a state of systems in debility.
there are recognized by a full and good recognition
and treatment in the various system and early or



As the γ ray penetrates several inches, both water, glass and the other components are affected.

the action of the medicine is being introduced into the rectum
the action of the action to a proper medium to answer
the intention of the appropriate remedy or remedy.
The action of a good diet. Then, accomplished this,
we are not to rest, ^{the} to be slowest and about the discharge
is great then, we also see, either of the
a mineral system, it is perhaps the best of these in
the in fact of the simple preparations.

to union with them in order to administer stringent
regulations. But this, however great, rarely has effect
anywhere save in the most popular. The results
depend in the proportion of 2 to 500 of water,
and 10 to 100 of sugar, 3 to 5 of water, and highly
colored by the vegetables, the infusion of galls, or even
tea and green tea in such doses, is perhaps most approved.
The authorities on cold baths are various, but scarcely
imagine a cold to be of considerable service.

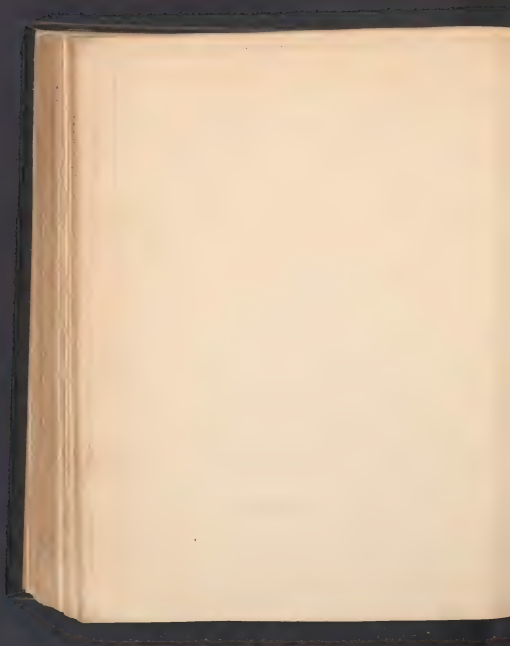












times of from 5 to 6. Three times a day, I am indebted
to my best information on the subject to one, how-
ever, Dr. Col. and Dr. S. on the 1st. Dr. Col. and Dr. S. with
him. If the weather did not impede, I was con-
vinced to have sent to employ, etc. I regret that it is
not in my power to lay before you a detailed
account of the cases which occurred to Dr. Col. and Dr. S. but I am
most deeply indebted with stating that on
the 1st, in 1824, he observed to me, that he had expe-
rienced the disease in a number of cases of leucoderma
with the most complete success, having never failed
in a single instance to cure the disease. How long he
had employed the method known to that period I am
not prepared to state.

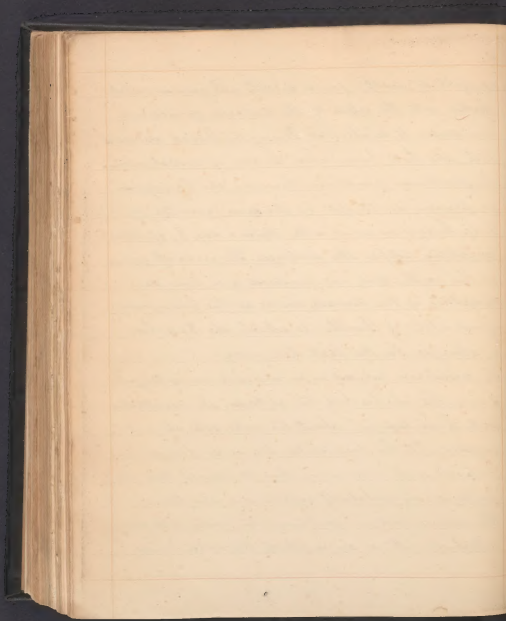
My own experience is of course limited. I have, how-
ever, had an opportunity of administering them in
10 cases which occurred amongst the teachers of the
city. One of them was in a married woman, aged
32 years, in whom the disease had existed for three
years, according to her own statements, which I am



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no right to doubt, for her debility and general aspect
together with the colour of the discharge, proclaimed
her disease to be chronic. During this period she stated
that she had been under the care of several medical
gentlemen from whom, however, she had derived
no permanent benefit. In this case, I gave ʒss of
Pulv. Cubeb. in sweet milk, three a day, ʒij of which,
completely stopped the discharge. She gradually regain-
ed her health, and has remained free from every
symptom of the disease, and is at this time enjoying
a good state of health, to which she had been
a stranger for the last three years.

The second case, occurred in an unmarried woman, 22 years
of age, but who has had two children; she was attacked
with leucorrhoea in about two weeks after she was
confined with her last child, but as she had not ex-
perienced much inconvenience from it, thought that it
would in all probability subside *sua sponte*.

The disease had now continued two weeks when being
attacked with a severe fit of the colic, I was



sent for. After the colic had subsided, she unfolded
her situation to me, I immediately administered the
bubles precisely as in the first case, and in the
course of a few days, the discharge began to diminish
and soon disappeared. She has had no return of
the disease and is at this time apparently well.

I have now stated all the facts which I am in possession
of, with regard to this medicine in the treatment of
leucorrhoea, and certainly think, that it possesses advan-
tages, which we will not realize in the medicines
heretofore recommended. I consider, that it is more
safe, certain and prompt and less disagreeable, than
the remedies now in common use.

I have thus brought to a close the treatment of the
disease, and hope that the few facts which I have addu-
ced may prove serviceable in its subsequent management.

